

45. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services without a separate player tracking unit.

46. The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services without a separate player tracking unit.

47. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services using two or more of the following physical devices coupled to the housing and directly controlled by the master gaming controller: a) the main display, b) a secondary display different from the main display, c) a card reader, d) a key pad, e) a touch screen, f) a microphone, g) a wire-less communication interface, h) a bar code reader, i) input buttons on the gaming machine and j) combinations thereof.

48. The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services using two or more of the following physical devices coupled to the housing and directly controlled by the master gaming controller: a) the main display, b) a secondary display different from the main display, c) a card reader, d) a key pad, e) a touch screen, f) a microphone, g) a wire-less communication interface, h) a bar code reader, i) input buttons on the gaming machine and j) combinations thereof.

REMARKS

Claims 1-44 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1-44 were rejected. Claims 1-3, 6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 18-22, 24, 30, 32-34, 37, 38 and 44. Please add claims 45-48.

A rejection of claim 3 in the pending claims does not appear to have been made by the Examiner.

Discussion of the Present Invention and Prior Art cited by the Examiner

The present invention provides a gaming machine for generating a game of chance and providing player tracking services. The gaming machine, as recited in claim 1, may comprise "a master gaming controller mounted within the housing designed or configured i) to control one or more games played on the gaming machine, ii) to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events, c) receiving player tracking information from the physical devices, d) displaying player tracking

information to the physical devices, e) tracking game usage by individual players using the gaming machine, f) transmitting player tracking information to remote gaming devices and g) receiving player tracking information from remote gaming devices.” The player tracking functions performed by the master gaming controller are patentably distinct features of the present invention. Next, traditional gaming machines and player tracking units are described in the context of the prior art cited by the Examiner.

In current gaming machines used to generate games of chance in locations such as casinos, player tracking functions are provided by a separate player tracking unit mounted to the gaming machine. Walker (U.S. patent 6,113,492), Acres (U.S. patent 5,702,304), Acres (U.S. patent 6,371,852) and Pease (5,766,076) describe separate player tracking units mounted to the gaming machines. Boushy (U.S. patent 6,183,362) describes player tracking in general but does not provide any details of the gaming machine and the player tracking system. Lichtman (U.S. 5,819,107) and Kelly (U.S. 6,293,865) do not describe player tracking units and their functions.

In traditional gaming machines, the player tracking unit is mounted as a separate device to the gaming machine. To provide player tracking functions, a player tracking controller in the player tracking unit evaluates player tracking events and controls the operation of the devices in the unit, such as a card reader, display and key pad. The player tracking unit may communicate with a gaming machine via well-defined interface that allows a limited amount of information to be exchanged between the gaming machine and the player tracking unit. The gaming machine logically sees the player tracking unit as a “black box” and does not see the individual devices on the player tracking unit.

This type of architecture has been employed because of the highly regulated environment in which gaming machines are deployed. Any time software is changed on the gaming machine that is used by the master gaming controller, which controls the game of chance played on the gaming machine, the software must be approved before it is installed on the gaming machine and then checked when it is installed on the gaming machine to confirm that it is approved software. Because traditional separate player tracking units are not used to control the game of chance on the gaming machine, they are subject to a much less rigorous regulation approval process. Thus, by using a separate player tracking unit that is a “black box” to the gaming machine with a well defined interface to the master gaming controller, the devices and software on the player tracking unit and associated player tracking functions may be changed without changing software on the master gaming controller and incurring the associated costs of a costly reapproval/installation process required when the software used by the master gaming controller is altered. As discussed in the background of the present invention, a disadvantage of using a separate player tracking

unit is that the devices on the player tracking unit are not accessible to the master gaming controller on the gaming machine and can not be controlled by the master gaming controller and add additional cost to the gaming machine.

Acre's (5,702,304) describes a traditional player tracking unit. A player tracking controller 98 is used to control the operation of player tracking devices, such as card reader 100 and display 102. The player tracking controller evaluate player tracking events, such as when a card is inserted into the card reader, and controls the card reader in response to the events (see Col. 14, 1. 8-32). The player tracking unit communicates with gaming machine and the network through discrete interfaces (see FIG. 2). For instance, through a serial machine interface 60, the player tracking unit sends reconfiguration commands to the gaming machine (Col. 9. 1. 50-Col. 10 1. 12). As another example, through the discrete machine interface 72, the player tracking unit receives a limited number of outputs from the gaming machine corresponding to known events in the machine, such as, an EXTRA signal, a POWER signal, a COIN IN signal, a COIN OUT signal, a COIN DROP signal A JACKPOT signal, a HANDLE signal, a TILT signal, a SLOT DOOR signal and a DROP DOOR signal (Col. 10, 1. 19-35). The gaming machine sees the player tracking unit as a "black box "and control of the devices on the player tracking unit by the master gaming controller on the gaming machine are not described.

In Acre's (6,113, 852), a separate player tracking unit with a card reader, display and speaker are described (See FIG. 2). The details of the player tracking unit are not described. However, the reference states that the card reader and player tracking card are known in the art, as are player tracking systems, examples being disclosed in the '882 patent (Col. 5, 1. 2-7). The '882 patent (U.S. patent no. 5,752,882 incorrectly referenced in 6,113, 852 as U.S. patent no. 5, 572, 882) has the same specification as Acre's (5,702, 304) described above. Thus, the teachings in 6,113,852 and 5,702, 304 in regards to player tracking systems are the same.

In Pease, a separate player tracking unit mounted to the gaming machines is described (See FIG. 1). The player tracking system, which permits the casino computer system to identify the player playing at the machines, may involve a carder reader or other I/O devices. The player tracking systems are connected to a remote computer, such as a front end controller 114. The player tracking system is used in conjunction with a gaming device. (Col. 3, 1. 37-60). In Pease, the control of the individual devices in the player tracking system are not described. However, no suggestion is provided that the devices in the player tracking system are controlled by the master gaming controller on a gaming machine.

Walker describes a gaming machine with a CPU 110 that calculates a game outcome (Col. 4, 1. 9-26), directs a reel controller to spin reels to present the game outcome (Col. 4 , 1.

43-65) and controls a hopper to dispense coins (Col 5, 1. 1-5). In Walker, a separate player tracking unit is described as a player tracking card reader device 160 connected to the CPU 110. The player tracking card reader device 160 includes a display area 162, a key pad 164 and card reader 166 (FIG. 1 and Col. 5, 1. 6-19). In FIG.1, the player tracking card reader device and its associated devices are represented as a single block unit with a single connection to the CPU 110, which is consistent with a traditional separate player tracking unit. In Walker, communication of information between the player tracking device and the CPU 110 is described. For instance, the player tracking card reader reads the player tracking identifying information from the player tracking card and communicates the information to the CPU 110 (Col. 13, 1. 19-25 or Col. 14, 1. 60-Col. 15 1. 2). The control of the display area 162, the key pad and the card reader by the player tracking card reader device is not described in Walker (See Col. 5, 1. 5-20). However, Walker does not provide any teaching or a motivation that suggests that the devices in the player tracking card reader device 166 are directly controlled or operated by the CPU 110 on the gaming machine.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 23, 24, 32, 34, 37-39, 41, 42 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Walker, U.S Patent 6, 113, 492. The applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The present invention, as described in claims 1, 24 and 44, recites, a gaming machine that generates a game of chance with "a master gaming controller mounted within the housing designed or configured i) to control one or more games played on the gaming machine, ii) to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events." In Walker, a traditional separate player tracking unit mounted to the gaming machine is described where the player tracking unit communicates information to the CPU. The control of the player tracking devices in the player tracking unit are not described. However, Walker does not provide any teaching or suggestion that the control of the devices is any different than in a traditional player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices in the player tracking unit and only a limited amount of information is communicated between player tracking unit and the gaming machine. A master gaming controller designed or configured "to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player

tracking events," is not described in Walker. For at least these reasons, the Walker reference can't be said to anticipate claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 23, 24, 32, 34, 37-39, 41, 42 and 44 and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

The applicant also respectfully submits that the additional limitations recited in claims 45 and 46, "wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services without a separate player tracking unit," is also patentably distinct over Walker, which describes a separate player tracking unit. Further, the combinations of devices recited in claims 47 and 48 are also patentably distinct over Walker, which describes the player tracking services being provided using a card reader, keypad and display.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The examiner rejected claim 5, 8, 35 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Acres, U.S. Patent 6, 317, 852. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As described above, Walker does not provide any teaching or suggestion that the control of the devices is any different than in a traditional player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices in the player tracking unit and only a limited amount of information is communicated between player tracking unit and the gaming machine. Acres describes a separate player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices and a limited amount information is communicated between the player tracking unit and the gaming machine which teaches away from the present invention. Walker, Acres or the combination of Walker and Acres do not teach or suggest a master gaming controller designed or configured "to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events." Thus, for at least these reasons, the combination of Walker in View of Acres can't be said to render obvious claim 5, 8, 35 and 40, which depend from claims 1 or 24, and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

The examiner rejected claim 9, 10, 25-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Lichtman, U.S. 5, 819, 107. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As described above, Walker does not provide any teaching or suggestion that the control of the devices is any different than in a traditional player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices in the player tracking unit and only a limited amount of information is communicated between player tracking unit and the gaming machine. Lichtman does not described player tracking functions. Walker, Lichtman, or the combination of Walker and Lichtman do not teach or suggest a master gaming controller designed or configured

"to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events." Thus, for at least these reasons, the combination of Walker in View of Lichtman can't be said to render obvious claim 9, 10, 25-31, which depend from claims 1 or 24, and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

The examiner rejected claim 13, 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Boushy, U.S. 6, 183, 362. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As described above, Walker does not provide any teaching or suggestion that the control of the devices is any different than in a traditional player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices in the player tracking device and only a limited amount of information is communicated between player tracking unit and the gaming machine. Boushy describes player tracking but does not provide details of the operation of player tracking units or the associated gaming machines in regards to control of the devices on the gaming machine and the player tracking unit. Walker, Boushy, or the combination of Walker and Boushy do not teach or suggest a master gaming controller designed or configured "to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events." Thus, for at least these reasons, the combination of Walker in View of Boushy can't be said to render obvious claim 13 and 14, which depend from claim 1, and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

The examiner rejected claim 17, 21, 22, 33 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Acres, U.S. 5,702, 304. The rejection is respectfully traversed. As described above, Walker does not provide any teaching or suggestion that the control of the devices is any different than in a traditional player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices in the player tracking unit and only a limited amount of information is communicated between player tracking unit and the gaming machine. Acres describes a separate player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices and a limited amount information is communicated between the player tracking unit and the gaming machine which teaches away from the present invention. Walker, Acres or the combination of Walker and Acres do not teach or suggest a master gaming controller designed or configured "to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events." Thus, for at least these reasons, the combination of Walker in View of Acres can't be said to render obvious claim 17, 21, 22, 33 and 36, which depend from claims 1 or 24, and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

The examiner rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Pease, U.S.S. 766,076 and Kelly U.S. 6, 293,865. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

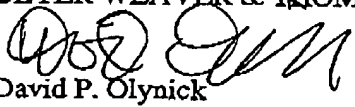
As described above, Walker does not provide any teaching or suggestion that the control of the devices is any different than in a traditional player tracking unit where a player tracking controller controls the player tracking devices in the player tracking device and only a limited amount of information is communicated between player tracking unit and the gaming machine. Pease describes a traditional separate player tracking units. Kelly does not describe player tracking units. Therefore, Walker, Pease, Kelly or the combinations of Walker, Pease and Kelly do not teach or suggest a master gaming controller designed or configured "to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events." Thus, for at least these reasons, the combination of Walker in View of Kelly and Pease can't be said to render obvious claim 20, which depend from claim 1, and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

Additional Prior Art Cited By Examiner In The Telephone Interview

The examiner cited Wiltshire et al. U.S. patent 6,409, 602 in the telephone interview as additional prior art. Wiltshire describes a client/host gaming system. The host generates games and streams them to a client terminal. A separate accounting server for player tracking can also be used (Col. 4, 1. 66-Col. 5, 1. 10). However, the details of the player tracking functions are not described. For instance, the Wiltshire does not describe what player tracking functions the host, which generates the games, or the client, which displays the games, would provide. However, the input/output devices connected to the client, such as a card reader used as a wage acceptor 150 and the display 140, are controlled by the client 120 (See FIG. 1A, FIG. 2, Col. 4, 1. 30-33 and Col. 7, 1. 23-40). Thus, although not shown in the reference, any use of the card reader or other input/output devices used to provide player tracking functions on the client would also be controlled by the client 120. This teaches away from the present invention as described in claims 1 which recites, "a master gaming controller mounted within the housing designed or configured i) to control one or more games played on the gaming machine, ii) to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions," such as, "directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events," because the host generates games and the client controls its own input/output devices, such as the devices to provide the player tracking functions on the client. This architecture is similar to a gaming machine with a separate player tracking unit where the gaming machine generates the games and the player tracking unit performs the player tracking functions. Thus, Wiltshire can't be said to anticipate or render obvious claims 1-48 as amended in the present invention.

Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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APPENDIX A

1. (Amended) A gaming machine comprising:

[at least one input device for inputting player tracking information into the gaming machine;]

[a communication interface for transmitting at least the player tracking information to a site outside the gaming machine;]

a housing;

a master gaming controller mounted within the housing designed or configured i) to control[that controls] one or more games played on the gaming machine, ii) to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising: a) evaluating player tracking events, b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events, c) receiving player tracking information from the physical devices, d) displaying player tracking information to the physical devices, e) tracking game usage by individual players using the gaming machine, f) transmitting player tracking information to remote gaming devices and g) receiving player tracking information from remote gaming devices [and receives player tracking events from at least one of the input device and the site outside the gaming machine; and]

a main display coupled to the housing used to display the one or more games controlled by the master gaming controller;

one or more input devices coupled to the housing for accepting indicia of credit wherein the indicia of credit are for making wagers on the games played on the gaming machine;

one or more output devices coupled to the housing for dispensing the indicia of credit;

one or more input devices coupled to the housing for inputting the player tracking information into the gaming machine wherein the input devices are among the plurality of physical devices directly controlled by the master gaming controller;

a communication interface coupled to the housing for communicating at least the player tracking information between the gaming machine and the remote gaming devices.

[a memory storing player tracking software that allows the master gaming controller to operate on the player tracking events and allows the master gaming controller to provide gaming services].

2. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, [wherein the gaming service is player tracking or and accounting] further comprising:

a memory storing player tracking software that allows the master gaming controller to perform the player tracking functions.

3. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the input device for inputting the player tracking information is selected from the group consisting of a card reader, a key pad, a touch screen, a microphone, a wire-less communication interface, or a bar code reader.

4. The gaming machine of claim 1, further comprising at least one display device for displaying the player tracking information.

5. The gaming machine of claim 4, wherein the display device is a monitor, a LCD, a fluorescent display, or a sound projection device.

6. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the [gaming machine] game is a mechanical slot game [machine], a video slot game [machine], a keno game or a video poker game.

7. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the communication interface is connected to a network.

8. The gaming machine of claim 7, wherein the network is a casino area network, wide area progressive network, bonus game network or a cashless system network.

9. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim [1]2, wherein the memory stores software for one or more device drivers that allow the master gaming controller to operate at least some of the input devices.

10. The gaming machine of claim 9, wherein the device driver uses a communication protocol including Netplex, USB, Ethernet, Firewire, direct memory map, PCI, serial and parallel.

11. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim [1]2, wherein the memory stores software for one or more device interfaces that allow the master gaming controller to detect the player tracking events from the [input device]physical devices directly controlled by the master gaming controller.

12. The gaming machine of claim 11, wherein the device interface is a card reader, a monitor, a display, or key pad.

13. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the communication interface is connected to at least two different networks using the same communication connection.

14. The gaming machine of claim 13, wherein the communication connection is Ethernet.

15. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein [the site outside the gaming machine]one of the remote gaming devices is [at least one]a player tracking server.

16. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim [1]2, wherein the master gaming controller includes a memory storing software for receiving the player tracking events from the [site outside the gaming machine]remote gaming devices.

17. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the player tracking information is at least one of a player name, a time, a date, an amount wagered, a location, and a type of game.

18. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim [1]2, wherein the memory stores software that allows the master gaming controller to receive at least player tracking information from the [site outside the gaming machine]remote gaming devices and to send at least player tracking information to the [site outside the gaming machine]remote gaming devices using one or more communication protocols.

19. (Amended) The game machine of claim 18, wherein the communication protocol is selected from the group consisting of a manufacturer player tracking communication protocol and TCP/IP communication protocol.

20. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim [1]1, wherein the [input device inputs]the gaming machine is capable of receiving player tracking information from [at least] one or more of a magnetic-striped card, a smart card, a personal digital assistant, a finger print reader, a wire-less device, a sound device and a bar-coded ticket.

21. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim [1]2, wherein the master gaming controller includes a memory storing software that allows the master gaming controller to detect power- failures.

22. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, further comprising: a non-volatile memory for storing [wherein the master gaming controller stores at least some] player tracking events [to a non-volatile memory].

23. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the communication interface includes a wire-less communication interface.

24. (Amended) A method for providing player tracking services on a gaming machine with i) a housing, ii) a master gaming controller mounted within the housing that controls a plurality of physical devices used to present games and to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine. iii) a main display coupled to the housing used to display the games. iv) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for accepting indicia of credit for wagering on the games. v) one or more output devices for dispensing the indicia of credit; vi) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for inputting the player tracking information into the gaming machine; and vii) a communication interface coupled to the housing for communicating with remote gaming devices [a master gaming controller, an input device, and a communication interface], the method comprising:

loading player tracking software into a memory utilized by the master gaming controller on the gaming machine wherein the player tracking software is for allowing the master gaming controller to directly control operating features of the plurality of physical devices used to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine;

receiving a player tracking related event from at least one of the physical devices and the remote gaming devices;

evaluating the player tracking event using the player tracking software; and
in response to the player tracking event, controlling operation features of the physical devices with the master gaming controller to provide the player tracking services.

[sending player tracking information to at least one site outside the gaming machine using the communication interface.]

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the player tracking software includes player tracking device interfaces, player tracking device drivers, player tracking event evaluators, and player tracking communication protocol translators.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the player tracking device driver is for a card reader, a monitor, a key pad, or a display.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the player tracking device drivers utilize a communication protocol selected from the group including Netplex, USE, Ethernet, Firewire, PCI, direct memory map, Serial and Parallel.

28. The method of claim 25, wherein the player tracking device interfaces are selected from the group consisting of card readers, key pads and displays.

29. The method of claim 25, wherein when a first player tracking device driver is replaced with a second player tracking device driver different from said first player tracking device driver, the player tracking device interface corresponding to said first player tracking device driver and said second player tracking device driver is not changed.

30. (Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising translating the player tracking information to a communication protocol used by one of the remote gaming devices.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the communication protocol is selected from the group consisting of a manufacturer player tracking protocol and TCP/IP.

32. (Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising:

sending player tracking information one of the remote gaming devices using the communication interface wherein the one gaming device is a player tracking server [the site outside the gaming machine is at least one server.]

33. (Amended) The method of claim [24]32, wherein the player tracking information is at least one of a player name, a time, a date, an amount wagered, a location, and a type of game.

34. (Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising displaying player tracking information to a display device controlled by the master gaming controller.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the display device is a monitor, a fluorescent screen, an LCD or a sound projection device.

36. The method of claim 24, further comprising storing a player tracking event to a non-volatile memory.

37. (Amended)The method of claim 24, further comprising [operating a player tracking device] tracking game usage by individual players using the gaming machine.

38. (Amended) The method of claim 37, further comprising:
receiving player tracking information from the physical devices wherein the physical devices are selected from the group consisting of [the player tracking device] is a card reader, a touch screen, a key pad, panel buttons [or], a display and a bar-code reader.

39. The method of claim 24, wherein the communication interface is connected to a network.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the network is a casino area network, wide area progressive network, bonus game network, or a cashless system network.

41. The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is a slot machine, a video slot machine, a keno game, or a video poker game

42. The method of claim 24, wherein the player tracking event is an encapsulated information packet.

43. The method of claim 24, wherein the player tracking event is sent to two or more destinations.

44. (Amended) At least one computer readable medium containing a program for providing player tracking services on a gaming machine with i) a housing, ii) a master gaming controller mounted within the housing that controls a plurality of physical devices used to present games and to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine, iii) a main display coupled to the housing used to display the games, iv) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for accepting indicia of credit for wagering on the games, v) one or more output devices for dispensing the indicia of credit, vi) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for inputting the player tracking information into the gaming machine; and vii) a communication interface coupled to the housing for communicating with remote gaming devices [a master gaming controller, an input device, and a communication interface], the said at least one computer medium comprising:

computer readable code for loading player tracking software into a memory utilized by the master gaming controller on the gaming machine wherein the player tracking software is for allowing the master gaming controller to individually control the plurality of physical devices used to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine;

computer readable code for receiving a player tracking related event from at least one of the physical devices and the remote gaming devices;

computer readable code for evaluating the player tracking event using the player tracking software; and

computer readable code for in response to the player tracking event, controlling operation features of the physical devices with the master gaming controller to provide the player tracking services.

[computer readable code for sending player tracking information to at least one site outside the gaming machine using the communication interface.]

45. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services without a separate player tracking unit.

46. The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services without a separate player tracking unit.

47. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services using two or more of the following physical devices coupled to the housing and directly controlled by the master gaming controller: a) the main display, b) a secondary display different from the main display, c) a card reader, d) a key pad, e) a touch screen, f) a microphone, g) a wire-less communication interface, h) a bar code reader, i) input buttons on the gaming machine and j) combinations thereof.

48. The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services using two or more of the following physical devices coupled to the housing and directly controlled by the master gaming controller: a) the main display, b) a secondary display different from the main display, c) a card reader, d) a key pad, e) a touch screen, f) a microphone, g) a wire-less communication interface, h) a bar code reader, i) input buttons on the gaming machine and j) combinations thereof.